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28 February 1969

MEMORANDUM FOR THE RECORD

SUBJECT: Discussion with Frank Slatinshek, Counsel, House
Armed Services Committee, Regarding the Pueblo
Subcommittee Hearings

1. Met with Mr. Frank Slatinshek and discussed with him the upcoming Pike Subcommittee hearings on the Pueblo loss. While I was with Mr. Slatinshek, he called Mr. Kenneth BeLieu, at the White House, and discussed with him the two problem areas encountered by the Committee in attempting to gain information from the Navy: failure of the Navy to provide a copy of the executive sessions of the Naval Board of Inquiry on the Pueblo loss, and the avoidance of answers to 13 questions posed by the Committee the day before on the ground that the questions and answers related to matters under consideration by the Navy Board of Inquiry. Mr. Slatinshek mentioned to Mr. BeLieu his request to CIA for the names and official titles of members of the 303 Committee.

2. Mr. Slatinshek noted to Mr. BeLieu that although it is understandable that such information as the 303 Committee membership would be properly released only by the White House, that the overall problem of gaining information for the Committee and the conduct of the hearings by Chairman Pike may be one that will have to be resolved by referral back to the Secretary of Defense or eventually back to the White House. Mr. Slatinshek did not receive any answers or response as such from Mr. BeLieu. Mr. Slatinshek was relaying for Chairman Pike the problem as it appears to the Chairman at this time.

3. Mr. Slatinshek then called Chairman Pike and briefed him on his conversations with Mr. BeLieu and raised the question of the appearance of scheduled witnesses before the Committee starting on Tuesday. After this conversation was completed, Mr. Slatinshek advised that Admiral Moore and possibly the Navy JAG

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would be appearing on Tuesday and he was now making a formal request for the Chairman for Mr. Helms to appear in open session on Wednesday, 5 March. Mr. Slatinshek noted, in all probability after whatever prepared statement the Director would care to make, the Chairman would move the hearing into executive session for a possibly more detailed presentation and questioning.

4. I discussed the question of the hearings and the Director's appearance at some length and emphasized the problems inherent in the DCI's appearance in an open session even if only to present a prepared statement.

5. In discussion, Mr. Slatinshek pointed out that the Chairman and the members of the Committee feel strongly that there has been a serious compromise of American electronic gear and equipment and that the compromise appears to be the result of either personal failure at the command level or the failure of the system of review and approval of such missions. They feel that if the former is involved, the individual or individuals should be removed or if the failure involves the system in use, that the system should be changed immediately.

6. I talked later with Mr. Blandford and with Mr. Blandford and Mr. Slatinshek together and received additional emphasis that Chairman Rivers and Chairman Pike are in concert on the hearings and that Mr. Pike has unanimous approval of his members with regard to the planned conduct of the hearing.

7. Later in the day, Mr. Maury was advised that Chairman Pike had agreed to hear the Director in closed session. This information was confirmed by Mr. Slatinshek.

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Assistant Legislative Counsel

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